
A written hazard communication program ensures that all employers receive the information they need to inform and train their employees properly and to design and put in place employee protection programs. It also provides necessary hazard information to employees, so they can participate in, and support, the protective measures in place at their workplaces.

Employers therefore must develop, implement, and maintain at the workplace a written, comprehensive hazard communication program that includes provisions for container labeling, collection and availability of material safety data sheets, and an employee training program. It also must contain a list of the hazardous chemicals, the means the employer will use to inform employees of the hazards of non-routine tasks (for example, the cleaning of reactor vessels), and the hazards associated with chemicals in unlabeled pipes. If the workplace has multiple employers onsite (for example, a construction site), the rule requires these employers to ensure that information regarding hazards and protective measures be made available to the other employers onsite, where appropriate. In addition, all covered employers must have a written hazard communication program to get hazard information to their employees through labels on containers, MSDSs, and training.

The written program does not have to be lengthy or complicated, and some employers may be able to rely on existing hazard communication programs to comply with the above requirements. The written program must be available to employees, their designated representatives, the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

(Sample programs are available in the Compliance Directive CPL 2-2.38 D, Appendix E. Also, see *Hazard Communication—A Compliance Kit* (OSHA 3104) (a reference guide to step-by-step requirements for compliance with the OSHA standard.) The kit can be obtained from the Government Printing Office. (See **OSHA Related Publications** for ordering information.)